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ABSTRACT

In 1990, the President's Task Force on College Governance was created at Grant MacEwan Community College (GMCC) in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada to survey college staff about their attitudes and expectations regarding their involvement in college decision-making processes and to make recommendations for improvement in these processes. The first actions of the Task Force were directed toward forming needed working groups; educating Task Force members about the legislative definition of governance, results of a 1987 staff survey about staff involvement and communication, and the evolution of governance at GMCC; and bringing in speakers from other institutions and agencies to discuss leadership, governance, and organizational development. Subsequent actions of Task Force sub-committees included the dissemination of a review of documents about collaboration governance; the conduct of focus groups to identify staff concerns about decision-making and communication; the development of a working definition of governance; the discussion of values related to governance; a collegewide staff survey and analysis of results; and the clarification of governance values and principles. Based on these efforts, a brief report summarizing key and supporting governance principles regarding college structures, decision-making and communication was circulated. In June 1991, the Task Force made nine recommendations for implementing these principles, including: (1) that all college units develop and implement action plans to put the governance principles into practice; (2) that the college operate on the principle that decision-making should be generally decentralized; and (3) that a series of workshops on empowerment, leadership, and interpersonal and group skills be made available to staff. Progress of the Task Force toward implementing the nine recommendations, and additional recommendations for the future are included in this report. (KP)

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ED 369 440

TASK FORCE ON COLLEGE GOVERNANCE

REPORT TO THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY: 3 YEARS IN PROGRESS

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FOREWORD

Task Force on College Governance
Report to the College Community

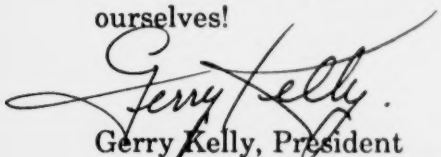
In very basic terms, Grant MacEwan Community College exists for the purpose of helping people improve through learning. Our task force on college governance has concluded that the very way in which we organize and the collaborative spirit in which decisions are made bears an important relationship to self-directed learning and personal development for students and staff alike. We want to build on our already positive environment to continually improve the quality of college life for all who work and study here.

Although this is a report to the college, it is not intended as a typical report just as many at MacEwan might say we aspire not to be a typical college. In the true spirit of empowerment this is a progress report to ourselves! Our intent over time is to cultivate the ideas and ideals herein to grow and become part of our collective consciousness at all levels in the college from classroom to boardroom.

A "final report" of our work will never be written because this is a work in progress, it is not a destination, but rather a journey of continuous improvement.

A true measure of our success will only be evident by the actions and the responsibility we accept both individually and by departments, programs or divisions to further the principles of collaborative governance. To fulfill the promise of these ideals we have agreed to engage in a process of quality learning opportunities for everyone at MacEwan.

I would like to commend Joan Patrick who chaired the concluding year of Task Force operations. All of those who have participated either on the Task Force or in developing action plans at the divisional, program, or service unit levels are to be congratulated. Your contribution to this significant work in collaborative governance enhances the foundation of a quality learning environment at Grant MacEwan. Furtherance of our ideals carries the potential to place our college community amongst the best in the world. Should we expect anything less for our students and ourselves!



Gerry Kelly, President
Grant MacEwan Community College
1994

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report represents the efforts of many people to reflect on the activities of the Task Force on College Governance from it's inception in early 1990 until the spring of 1993. Each of the task force members throughout that period, the steering committee, the alternates to the task force, and all those who have worked towards collaborative governance in all they do must be commended for their efforts. While this report in no way represents all that is done, and always has been done, to achieve a participative form of governance at Grant MacEwan Community College, it does highlight efforts and issues which lend themselves to a positive, ongoing dialogue about the way we live, work, and learn with this institution.

Jannie Edwards, Pat Wilson, and Marilyn Berg were instrumental in the preparation of this report; Marilyn Berg for her graduate thesis work which figures prominently the history section, and Jannie Edwards and Pat Wilson for their writing and editorial work with the recommendations.

Joan Patrick, Chairman,
Task Force on College Governance

HISTORY OF THE TASK FORCE ON COLLEGE GOVERNANCE
March 1990 - June 1991

In March 1990, the President's Task Force on College Governance (hereafter called the Task Force) was created to address the concerns voiced among college staff about college decision making and communication. Issues such as the Task Force mandate, timing, constituents, and sub-committees were discussed in some detail prior to asking for members from across the College to join the Task Force.

Invitations were sent out in March 1990, from the President's office asking for three people from each work group within the college to join a President's Task Force on College Governance, to meet twice monthly. There was some description about the focus of the "task" for the group which involved "surveying college staff to determine their attitudes and expectations regarding involvement in college decision-making processes, and to make recommendations for improvement in these processes. Once the task was completed the group would disband, but the recommendations would form the basis for action within the College" [Memo, April, 1990]. The President estimated that the Task Force would achieve its goals in two years time.

THE TASK FORCE BEGINS

The first meeting of the Task Force on College Governance was held in late April 1990, with 22 members and 3 alternate members present.

The purpose and function of the group was identified as taking a positive approach to examining the decision-making and communication processes within the college and developing recommendations for improvement. Key issues arising from small group discussion were the need to:

(a) clarify the mandate of the Task Force,
(b) identify alternate forms of governance including the private sector,
(c) examine present forms of decision-making and communication within the college, both real and perceived,
(d) identify college staff concerns in relation to governance,
(e) define and distinguish between decision-making and governance, and
(f) recognize constraints when making recommendation for change.

Several working groups or sub-committee groups were formed. Each member of the main Task Force was requested to sit on at least one of the other committees in an effort to share the workload. Groups formed included the:

(a) Steering Committee, which had a mandate to provide overall planning and organizational for the work of the Task Force,
(b) Survey Committee, which would develop a mechanism to investigate staff views and expectations regarding decision-making,
(c) Research Committee, which would gather information on alternate models and theories of governance from literature, practitioners and noted theorists, and the
(d) Communications Committee, which would communicate the work of the Task Force to the broader college community. A drafting committee would be sought in future to record and reflect on the work of the Task Force.

EDUCATION OF THE TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Task Force membership was drawn from across the college and included people from the non-academic instructional staff, faculty, non-academic staff, department chairs, deans, directors, senior administrators, student association representatives and one board member. In total the group had twenty-eight members and numerous alternate members. The members of the group played diverse roles within the college and had diverse educational backgrounds. To be effective, the members of the Task Force had to have some common understanding about the College mandate, the history of the College and where the College fits into the post-secondary system. In addition the group had to understand what governance meant from a theoretical perspective so that they could address issues within their own College. The steering committee proposed to clarify these perspectives with Task Force members using internal resources first and later external resources.

It was suggested by the President development by the members that the task forice itself represent an experience in self-directed behavior.

LEARNING FROM INTERNAL RESOURCES

Colleges Act

During the mid May meeting the President of the college discussed the nature of the concept of governance and some of the organizational or structural aspects of the college and the scope of the Colleges Act for the province. It was identified that the Board of Governors is the legal acting body for the college and it delegates the running of the institution to the President. Academic Council is also legislated in the Colleges Act and its role is to act as an advisory body.

Results of 1987 Staff Survey

Based on interest and availability, Task Force members were divided into three groups to review the issues arising from the 1987 survey in the June 26, 1990 meeting. Issues were:

a) opportunities for staff involvement and influence in decision-making,
b) the need to improve communication between staff and administration, and
c) the need for greater recognition of staff contributions and achievements.

Task Force members were to give a more clear definition of the problem, suggest some solutions to the problem, and identify difficulties which might be associated with implementing these solutions.

The first small group identified that the main issue related to decision-making was the need for highly qualified staff to influence the course of their jobs and careers within the college. Suggestions for improvement included the need to: sensitize administrators to staff resources and resource requirements, offer additional training in management skills for college managers, have greater faculty participation on college committees, review the mechanism for making management appointments, and possibly have a staff ombudsman to investigate complaints.

The second small group focused upon communication. The main issues were identified as:

a) college staff did not feel they had sufficient access to information that they needed, and

b) inadequate means existed for them to make their views known to decision makers.

Suggestions for improvement of the situation included: a "one-stop shopping" information centre on each campus which could provide ready access of information to staff, early communication of impending issues so that people could give input prior to the decision time, greater utilization of the staff associations as an avenue of communication and last, making staff aware of the existing channels for providing input.

The third small group addressed the issue of recognition. They decided there was a need for a common understanding of what constitutes recognition within the college. Questions raised by the group were what forms would recognition take, who would give the recognition, and what activities should be recognized.

Evolution of Governance at GMCC

The Academic Vice President traced the evolution of governance at the college during its first decade at the October 30, 1990 meeting. He talked about the over-reliance on committees as a governance mechanism in the early seventies, decentralization of decision-making to campus directors in the mid seventies, and later concerns of too much decentralization when academic and administrative responsibilities were given to campus directors.

The President then outlined the governance issues facing the college during the second decade (the 1980's). There had been an effort to improve administrative organization in the areas of budgeting and objective setting, as well as a move to a new structure of academic deans and administrative directors with college wide responsibilities. The president also described the "fuzzy" image of the college in the greater community as a problem.

The President outlined his vision for the college as one in which collaborative management would occur at all levels of the institution including the classroom. By using participative management the college would empower staff and students. The students would "learn what they live" if they were educated in a system where participative management is practised.

LEARNING FROM EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Gallagher

Paul Gallagher, President of the Vancouver Community College and founding President of Dawson College in Montreal, gave a presentation on organizations for the future in September 1990. Gallagher discussed principles that were used at Dawson College when it opened.

Arbuckle

Joe Arbuckle, an organizational development consultant, spoke to the Task Force in January 1991 about his experiences in working with a wide range of public and private organizations.

Fryer and Gulassa

In March 1991, Tom Fryer, Chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District in California and Cy Gulassa, President of the Foothill-De Anza Faculty Association spoke to the Task Force members on the topics of leadership in governance and collaborative governance at their institution.

ACTIONS OF THE TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Research Sub-Committee

In November 1990 the research committee sent out a forty page document which synthesized information gathered from published books and articles as well as information received from institutions which are involved in collaborative governance. Members were asked to read the document prior to the next meeting, when the discussion would centre around definitions of governance. Definitions of specific terms such as governance and leadership were identified. The group also provided information (Bolman and Deal, 1984) about four frameworks (structural, humanistic, political, and symbolic) for analyzing and understanding organizations.

Communications Sub-Committee

The communications sub-committee published the first of several "Update" Task Force Bulletins in November, 1990. The initial "Update" outlined the mandate of the Task Force and the communications, research and survey committees. Membership on the Task Force was outlined as representative of all college constituencies with more weight given to faculty representation due to the nature of the institution.

Survey Sub-Committee

Focus Groups

Ten focus groups were held during mid-November to mid-December, 1990. The purpose of the groups was to find out what concerns the members of the College community have in relation to decision making, communication and to consider what items might be included on the survey which is to be developed later.

In total, over one hundred people contributed to the focus group sessions. The part-time faculty members focus group was not attended by anyone even though letters had been sent to them prior to the group session.

Similar themes were consistent within and between groups even though actual examples were different. A summary of the themes, given to members of the Task Force in January, 1991, included:

a) power to make decisions lay within a small group in the college,
b) the process of decision making was frustrating (some people perceived their input was sought after the decision had been made),
c) communication between divisions and departments could have been improved,
d) "we are less cooperative and more competitive than we might be",
e) it wasn't safe to disagree with others, and
f) the environment was not very trusting.

Defining Governance for the College

Some definitions and concepts of governance from the printed materials distributed in November by the research committee were reviewed. The Task Force members were divided into four groups of seven people each, to discuss a working definition of governance. Each group brainstormed issues relevant to them which arose from the readings provided by the research group. The small groups were invited to share their discussion points with the entire group. The group decided to use Fryer's (1989) definition of governance:

> "institutional structures and processes for decision making and communication that is related to decision making....decisions mean all decisions: those related to policy development, policy implementation, resource allocation, curriculum development and implementation, institutional planning and priority setting, and so on".

Looking at Governance Values for the College

During the December 11, 1990 meeting, Task Force members were divided into small groups to discuss values related to governance. A value was defined as something intrinsically valuable or desirable. The group was to focus on the ideal.

Process values arising from the discussion were to: provide for congruence between structure and the task, be dynamic and flexible, provide for responsiveness in decision making, and be rational, timely and collaborative.

Structural values related to governance were: dynamic and flexible structure, broad representation of constituents, clarity in communication of mandate, equal responsibility and authority, clear lines of communication, consistency with institutional goals and policies, and allowance for responsible decision making by management.

Communication values were: open access to information, and openness and timeliness in communication. College climate values were identified as: openness to new ideas, opportunities for participation, honest and trusting climate, involving

the persons affected in the decision making process, tolerance for differing points of view, development of leadership skills in all staff, development of teamwork and professional development of staff through involvement in problem solving and decision making leading to an expanded knowledge base of issues affecting the college.

The College Survey

The survey sub-committee gave a preliminary overview about the staff questionnaire at the January 22, 1991 meeting. Questions were to be clustered in groups arising from issues raised in the focus groups and arising from the 1987 survey. Specific clusters of questions related to:

a) decision making,
b) communication and information flow,
c) organizational structure and management practices,
d) morale and college climate,
e) an open-ended question regarding "Advice to the President", and
f) a section related to demographic information such as job classification, status (part-time, continuing, etc.) and division.

An employee survey was sent to each member of the part-time and full-time staff in late March of 1991. Staff were asked to return the completed survey by April 5, 1991. Results of demographic data collection relating to position or function, etc. were not reported for any groups with fewer than six respondents.

The six sections in the employee survey included decision making, communications/information flow, organizational structure/management practices, college mission and goals, college climate/morale and employee survey. Each section included some questions with a five point Likert scale ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement. There was also a column for don't know/no opinion. Some sections included short check lists and all sections included space for suggestions or comments relating to it.

Nine items were related to decision making and six items related to communications. Respondents were asked to choose four preferred sources of college level information from a list of eleven sources. Respondents were asked to choose (by placing a check mark beside the item) from a list of twelve items, areas in which they felt they needed more information. Six items related to organizational structure, five items related to college mission and goals and seven items related to college climate/morale. The sixth section included three items about the employee survey.

There were about three hundred and thirty-five responses returned to the committee by April 9, 1991, which represented a fifty-five percent return rate from full-time staff and twenty percent return rate from part-time staff. The Survey and Steering committees reviewed the sixty pages of comments and the numerical data and reported to the Task Force at the May 19, 1991 meeting.

The May 19 meeting was four hours in length to allow for review of the results of the staff survey. A college staff member with expertise in statistics facilitated interpretation of the staff survey.

All groups of staff (administrators, non-academic support, instructional/faculty) saw the college as a good place to work and believed the employees were loyal to the institution. Areas of concern for all three groups related to morale and competition between divisions and programs.

A summary of the issues discussed at the May 19, 1991 meeting included five major areas. Discussion relating to decision making focused on the need for greater decentralization, collaboration and participation. Within the communications area there needed to be clarification and enhanced communication in bottleneck areas.

Clarification of Governance Values and Principles

The February 12, 1991 meeting provided Task Force members with an opportunity to review the governance values. Five statements were then melded into central phrases which the entire group agreed upon as guiding values. The phrases were:

a) principle; empowerment of staff and students
b) process; involvement of those affected in decision making in a climate of mutual trust and respect, and

c) outcome; environment that facilitates learning.

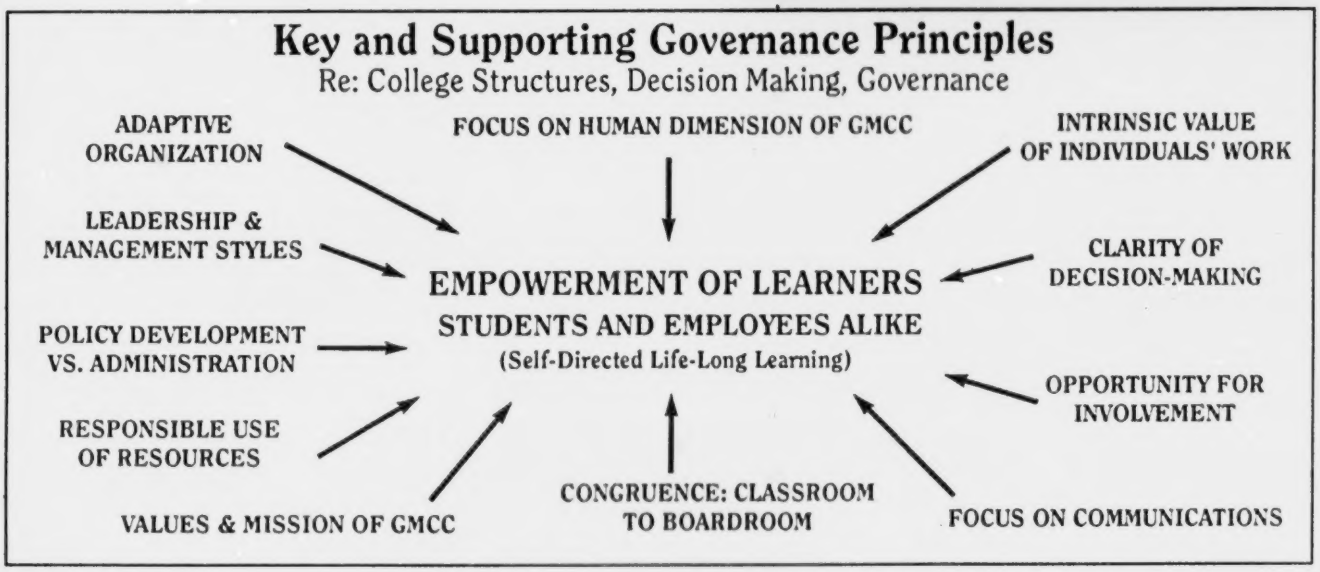
The core value outlined was empowerment of staff and students at the College.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON COLLEGE GOVERNANCE - JUNE 1991

Through the input of the various committees of the Task Force as a whole, a report was produced and circulated to the college community as a whole which identified the key principles of college governance and recommendations for integrating and enhancing their usage at all levels of college operation.

Key and Supporting Governance Principles Regarding College Structures, Decision Making and Communication

A summary of the principles of governance at Grant MacEwan Community College appears on the next page in diagram form. With the key and supporting principles a series of recommendations were made to ensure implementation of the principles at GMCC.


Key and Supporting Governance Principles
Re: College Structures, Decision Making, Governance
ADAPTIVE ORGANIZATION
FOCUS ON HUMAN DIMENSION OF GMCC
INTRINSIC VALUE OF INDIVIDUALS' WORK
LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT STYLES
CLARITY OF DECISION-MAKING
EMPOWERMENT OF LEARNERS
STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES ALIKE
(Self-Directed Life-Long Learning)
POLICY DEVELOPMENT VS. ADMINISTRATION
OPPORTUNITY FOR INVOLVEMENT
RESPONSIBLE USE OF RESOURCES
VALUES & MISSION OF GMCC
CONGRUENCE: CLASSROOM TO BOARDROOM
FOCUS ON COMMUNICATIONS

Key Governance Principles Developed By Task Force

CENTRAL PRINCIPLE

Empowerment of Learners - Students and Employees Alike
GMCC will provide opportunities which enable learners to take responsibility for and have influence on their learning and the conditions in which it takes place, as preparation for a life-long process of independent learning. College employees must be similarly empowered in order to create such conditions for student learning.

SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES

Focus on the Human Dimension of GMCC
Organizational development, interpersonal and group skills such as problem solving among college employees will be promoted to ensure that the process of collaborative governance works as smoothly as possible. Systems for employee support and recognition will also be a priority.

Intrinsic Value of Individuals' Work
The college recognizes and affirms the potential of each employee to contribute to the mission of the college. To ensure that each employee is provided an opportunity to excel, the college will provide jobs in which employees can experience intrinsic value in their work.

Clarity of Decision-Making
The roles and mandates of individuals and groups (i.e., committees) with responsibility for decision-making in various areas must be clearly defined and widely understood.

Opportunity for Involvement
College employees will have the opportunity to become involved, either directly or by representation, in decisions which affect them and their work units.

Focus on Communications
Open sharing of information at all levels, and effective channels of communication (upward, downward and lateral) are essential to the process of collaborative governance. There must be ongoing emphasis of both written and verbal communication.

Congruence: Classroom to Board Room
College operations, from the board and senior administrative level to divisions and units, to classroom activities, will all reflect the principle of empowerment as appropriate to the situation.

Values & Mission of GMCC
Development of and commitment to a common and well understood sense of college mission and guiding values as a framework within which staff are free to pursue objectives creatively. The cultivation of a common philosophy of purpose minimizes conflict and maximizes goal attainment.

Responsible Use of Resources
Public funds will be utilized as efficiently as possible toward the effective fulfillment of the college mission and achievement of specific objectives.

Policy Development vs. Administration
College governance must recognize distinctions between policy-setting functions, which require a particularly high degree of staff input and participation, and administrative functions, which require clear lines of authority and accountability to ensure leadership in the implementation of policies.

Leadership and Management Styles
The styles of leadership and management practised within the college need to reflect the principle of empowering staff to achieve objectives within the general scope of the college mission and values.

Adaptive Organization
The college will strive to be a flexible and responsive organization. The organizational structure will continue to evolve as the college adapts to internal and external change.

Recommendations - June 1991 and Follow-up Actions - to June 1993

In June 1991, the Task Force on College Governance made nine recommendations for implementation of the key and supporting principles, and, having met the objectives initially identified, the Task Force extended its mandate in order to act as a catalyst for the recommendations and their implementation. The activities of the Task Force, including the recommendations and responses to the recommendations, are outlined below.

Task Force Meetings

Throughout the September 1991 to June 1993 period the Task Force as a whole met each 6 weeks to review the progress of the college as it worked towards implementing the principles of governance identified. Specifically, the Task Force meetings served as a forum for a diverse group of college employees, students, and board members to meet, to discuss the application of the principles in varied college settings, and to hear individual work units express their interests and concerns through action plan reports on how their work unit was working with and toward the principles of collaborative governance. Meetings provided an opportunity to recognise the linkages between collaborative governance founded on the principle of the empowerment of learners and initiatives such as continuous improvement, or total quality management, and their application in an educational environment. Membership on the Task Force changed over the period identified, and, while maintaining the same relative representation from across the college, brought many more people from within the College community into direct contact with the issues relating to college governance.

Task Force Actions in Relation to Recommendations

A review of the Task Force's actions over the September 1991 - June 1993 period will highlight those activities undertaken in direct response to the recommendations within the June 1991 report. It must be noted that the commitment to collaborativegovernance is much broader than among the members of the Task Force alone, and many more activities have been undertaken in the spirit of shared governance than those noted below. No primary research has been conducted that would substantiate a cause effect relationship between any actions of the Task Force,

and these broader range activities. It is the firm belief, however, of the Task Force membership that gains in collaborative governance represent a change in culture, and that all such cultural changes result directly or indirectly from people championing causes in support of change. While it is certainly true that not all champions of change toward increasing shared governance are members of the Task Force, each member of the Task Force has championed the cause of collaborative governance within one or more college circles, and has certainly had effect far beyond those specific activities noted below.

Recommendation #1

> that all college divisions, programs administrative units, and committees develop and implement action plans to put the governance principles developed by the Task Force into practise in their areas.

Over 12 meetings held from September 24, 1991 until May 25, 1993, 28 actions plans were reported on by 25 work units within the college (2 academic divisions and the board of Governors choosing to present twice within that time). While it was common to have only one action plan report on an agenda in the early stages, by May 1993, there were as many as 7 units reporting at any given meeting.

Units decided upon their own boundaries for the purposes of creating an action plan. Offices that worked together sometimes sub-divided themselves further than similar offices in other areas or on other campuses, and, while programs of study within divisions sometimes would seem to work autonomously, academic divisions reported as a whole, rather than as individual programs.

While individuals on the Task Force were identified as available to facilitate sessions within units leading to the development of an action plan, the format of the plan was intentionally left open to allow interpretation by the unit. Typically, the format of action plans centred on the principles of governance, and activities within the work unit that supported, or needed to change to support the principle in question.
Over the 22 month period, the variety of interpretations and development of action plans included timelines, statements of belief, examples of principles in action, student statements, video reactions to principles, targets for change, etc. It was a strongly held belief among Task Force members that the development of action plans

was an individual work unit activity, and that the value of that activity was in the discussion and examination of practises that lead to the action plan report. The plans, as such, represented the ongoing nature of the work towards collaborative governance, rather than an end point.

Recommendation #2

> that the college operate on the principle that decision making should generally be decentralized to the units and individuals affected by the decisions. The process of decision making, and the roles played by individuals and groups in it, must also be clearly and widely understood.

The meetings of the Task Force provided an informal opportunity to examine decisions in relation to the principles of collaborative governance. Based on reports presented at Task Force meetings, it would seem that routine decisions made in individual work units were a focal point leading to the creation of many action plans, and that, in general there has been increased clarity within areas relating to the method and level of decision making. However, non-routine decisions still seem to be the subject of much debate within and between work units in the college. Certain high profile decisions, ie., budget, negotiating process, have received attention and have been clarified to a large degree, but wide impact non-routine decisions have created concern and continue to be discussed.

Recommendation #3

> that a series of workshops on empowerment, leadership, interpersonal and groups skills be developed and made available to college employees. Employees with the necessary skills should be identified to conduct these workshops, and to serve as consultants and facilitators on group process.

Following the distribution of the Task Force "Statement of Principles and Recommendations", four college employees created and delivered a series of workshops at Cromdale Campus for college employees from all areas. The focus of these workshops was to create an awareness of empowerment as the central principle of college governance. Participants were encouraged to identify means of empowering themselves and those around them toward more effective and rewarding involvement

with the governance issues at GMCC. These workshops served as a springboard to facilitating groups within the college examining more specific needs and questions relating to their work area, and the facilitators each did several sessions for particular interest groups over the next year.

Within this time frame, it was recognised that any word meant to encompass the core principle of college governance would be widely debated, and empowerment was no exception. A variety of definitions were considered, and in September, 1991 a paper from the Task Force was circulated to clarify the depth and breadth of meanings that might be attached to the term, while still maintaining value as a central principle In October 1992, a retreat was held for those interested in pursuing further visioning of what the college could/might/should look like. While not directly focused on the principles of college governance identified by the task force, the experience allowed a free reign on engaging with the colleges future, and, as such was built around the principle of empowerment. Many of those involved have continued their exploration at their own level and within other college activities.

Recommendation #4

> that the college implement the principle of open and timely access to information, through verbal communications, distribution of all committee minutes, open committee meetings, sharing of budget information, etc.

As with decision making, the Task Force meetings have provided a forum for discussion of specific access to information issues, most particularly as they relate to individual units action plans. As noted below, improved communication strategies have directed information based on the principle of open and timely access.

Recommendation #5

> that a comprehensive plan to improve internal College communications be developed and implemented.

In April, 1992, the Communications Sub-Committee of the Task Force released the Internal Communication Plan for GMCC (see Appendix D), and the Community Relations Department undertook the implementation of the recommended strategies. The plan was created based on the interests and needs expressed in the internal communication strategies segment of the March 1991 employee survey, and included clarification of goals, identification of targeted internal audiences, analysis of values, SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) related to internal communication, as well as strategies for communicating within the college. Communication of information, as an integral component of collaborative governance, has been supported through the variety of media outlined in the communications plan.

Recommendation #6

> that each administrative unit ensure that all positions are provides with job duties and work environments which create for the employee a sense of intrinsic value for their work.

Job duties that create a sense of value or worth will ultimately only be achieved in an environment of trust, openness, motivation, and involvement. While the Task Force has not had involvement with any level of job analysis, an approach which emphasizes the empowerment of all learners, including employees, will create an atmosphere in which individual have both the freedom and responsibility to act positively to change those jobs that do not have intrinsic value for the employee. The Task Force's efforts towards this principle have reinforced the need for a college environment supportive of change and growth towards fulfilment. One determinant of college environment is the statement of college objectives. Two objectives for the 1993/95 period relate to college climate and the collaborative governance principles.

Recommendation #7

> that a college wide program of employee recognition be developed and implemented.

In April, 1993, a comprehensive program to identify and honour excellence in instruction and service was approved by the Board of Governors, and was presented to the GMCC Faculty and Non-Academic Associations. The program supports and integrates with the MacEwan Medallion program for all College Staff as well as long service and retirement awards.

Recommendation #8

> that a process to enhance employee understanding of, and commitment to the college's mission and goals be developed and implemented.

The principles as identified by the June 1991 Task Force report have been incorporated into the college objectives, and the college community has been invited to enter into the goal planning process by the President. However, a further emphasis to the college mission and goals is, as yet, in the planning stages, and would become part of the organizational development program set out by the President and Associate Vice-President Academic at the May 1993 Task Force meeting, as would quality learning initiatives.

Recommendation #9

> that each College committee review it's mandate, membership, and reporting relationships in consultation with those responsible for its operation, and take appropriate action to clarify or revise committee structures as needed. A central directory of College committees should also be prepared as an information resource.

At the October 1992 Task Force meeting, a document outlining the purpose and composition of all identified college committees was circulated to Task Force members. While some of these committees have worked towards creating action plans relative to the governance principles (ie., Academic Council, Faculty Development), many others have yet to do so.

CONCLUSION

Remarks

No formal, institution wide research to monitor change, or cause/effect relationship, has yet been undertaken. If a culture shift toward more collaborative governance has taken place, to what degree are Task Force actions responsible? or is this question important?

Research of March 1991, showed comfort with immediate work group but increased levels of discomfort, distrust as moved out in wider circles. Focus of action plans within the college has been within units, and, not negating the gains achieved through those efforts, this may lead to a somewhat misleadingly positive picture, if one viewed action plan reports as the state of the nation regarding collaborative governance. Action plans do not address the cross unit boundary issues that many feel influence their life in the college, and their perception of the degree of empowerment enjoyed within their workplace.

As a task force, this group has had no direct vehicle to carry out some of the specific objectives referred to in the "Statement of Principles and Recommendations" of June 1991. However, those activities reliant on communication, or a forum for communication, have found task force meetings and workshops a positive force for change.

Membership has expressed that "things will never be done the same old way, ie., in a totally non-collaborative way without questions being raised...".

RECOMMENDATIONS

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

The following recommendations represent a synthesis of responses from Task Force meetings and an invitation by the Task Force Chair to provide input into the recommendations section of this report.

The theme of responses supports the concept that empowerment and collaborative governance is an ongoing journey, not a destination. It is important that this concept become part of our collective consciousness, and that the efforts promoted by the Task force on College Governance not be seen to negate or denigrate all that is historically and currently successful in our organizational culture. We must work to not forget the empowerment and collaborative governance principles and to continue momentum in developing dynamic ways of applying and assessing how they are working.

The Task Force on College Governance recommends that

1. all people in leadership positions at Grant MacEwan Community College, president through to instructors, identify, encourage, and implement management policies, processes, and procedures that foster the climate of trust necessary for the continuing evolution of the principles of collaborative governance and continuous quality improvement.

2. college administration, acting collaboratively, develop a strategy for clarifying, continuing, stewarding and evaluating collaborative governance dialogue as other college initiatives, such as continuous quality improvement, are considered and undertaken.

3. the college as a whole develop, and actively publicise continuous quality improvement principles and practices that are informed by empowerment and collaborative governance principles as well as by the college mission statement and value statement.

4. all members of the college community encourage the evaluation of all processes - from the classroom to the boardroom - in the context of these principles.

5. college administration, starting in the 1993/94 year, establish a regular 2 year cycle of college wide employee surveys which should address the empowerment, governance, and continuous quality improvement issues. Research should measure both expectations and outcomes (what is and what should be).

6. college administration develop an organizational development program for all college employees that incorporates empowerment, collaborative governance, and quality principles. The program should include a facilitating function as areas strive to work more collaboratively, and should also identify resources that may be drawn upon for implementation of collaborative principles.

7. the college community celebrate and communicate the successes, analyze and learn from the weaknesses, clarify roles, and examine inefficiencies in a safe environment that leads to continuous documented improvement.

and finally, the Task Force on College Governance recommends that

8. the broad college community bear in mind it's collaborative effort in identifying the principles of college governance and the supporting recommendations, and continue to carry these forward at each opportunity.

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